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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/548,201	04/13/2000	Michael Voticky	044839.0048	6646

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EXAMINER

ESCALANTE, OVIDIO

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2645

DATE MAILED: 03/11/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/548,201	Applicant(s) VOTICKY ET AL.	
	Examiner Ovidio Escalante	Art Unit 2645	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 January 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 98-118 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 98-118 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is in response to applicant's amendment filed on January 13, 2005. **Claims 98-118** are now pending in the present application.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

2. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on January 13, 2005 has been entered.

Double Patenting

3. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

4. Claims 98-118 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-20 of U.S. Patent No. 6,351,764. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because claims in continuation are broader than those in the patent. For example, claim 1, of the application does not require that code being a single desired code from the plurality of desired

Art Unit: 2645

codes that correspond to a single known identifier form the plurality of known identifiers in the database and that corresponds to the unique identifier if the unique identifier corresponds to one of the known identifiers as recited in claim 7 of the Patent or receiving the received information message are received in claim 1 of the Patent.

Provisional Double Patenting

Claims 98-118 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-20 of copending Application No. 09/683,315 in view of Scannell US Patent 5,377,354. Application 09/683,315 teaches everything except determining a personalized identifier corresponding to the message, wherein the personalized identifier does not require coordination between a user of the method and an originator of the message and locating the personalized identifier in a database. Scannell teaches, as shown below, determining a personalized identifier (sender field identifier) corresponding to the message, (col. 5, lines 32-39); wherein the personalized identifier does not require coordination between a user of the method and an originator of the message, (col. 7, lines 38-49) and locating the personalized identifier in a database, (col. 7, lines 38-42; the comparator 52 locates the sender identifier in the sender-list field database that matches the received sender message). Therefore, it would have been obvious to determining a personalized identifier corresponding to the message so that the message can be prioritized correctly.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented..

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

6. Claims 98,99,106-108,113 and 114 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Scannell US Patent 5,377,354.

As per claim 98:

Scannell teaches of a method for an electronic communications message system (fig. 1) to prioritize an information message (abstract; col. 2, lines 36-37, 49-62) comprising:

determining a personalized identifier (sender field identifier) corresponding to the message, (col. 5, lines 32-39); wherein the personalized identifier does not require coordination between a user of the method and an originator of the message, (col. 7, lines 38-49);

locating the personalized identifier in a database, (col. 7, lines 38-42; the comparator 52 locates the sender identifier in the sender-list field database that matches the received sender message);

assigning from the database a code (1 – highest priority through 5 – lower priority) corresponding to the personalized identifier, (col. 6, lines 65-68); and

depositing the message into at least two of a plurality of virtual mailboxes (in-tray 16, FLDR-1 17, FLDR-2 18) wherein the message is prioritized within such virtual mailboxes based on the code, (col. 2, lines 21-27; col. 8, lines 14-18).

As per claims 99,108 and 114:

Scannell teaches of wherein the database, the personalized identifier, the code, and the correlation between the personalized identifier/identity code and the (priority) code and the code

Art Unit: 2645

are initially defined by a user and subsequently changeable by said user, (col. 6, lines 9-17; the user can set up rules that are used to prioritize the messages).

As per claims 106 and 107:

Scannell teaches a system for prioritizing a received information (abstract) message, comprising:

a database, (rules store 12);

a plurality of known personalized identifiers stored in the database, (col. 6, lines 18-22,27-30; fig. 2; the personalized identifiers represent the identity of the senders);

a plurality of identity codes, wherein each of the known personalized identifiers is associated with one of the plurality of identity codes, (col. 6, lines 65-68; the user assigns a priority level based on the sender/personalized identifier);

a computing device (rules test unit) for determining a first personalized identifier associated with a received information message, (col. 5, line 65-col. 6, line 3) wherein the first personalized identifier is not dependent upon coordination between a user of the system and an originator of the received information message;

a priority assignment device for assigning a priority code to the received information message corresponding to the identity code associated with any matched first personalized identifier, (col. 9, lines 23-30); and

a prioritizer to prioritize the message according to the priority code, (col. 2, lines 21-27; ; col. 6, lines 65-68; col. 8, lines 9-19; col. 9, lines 23-30); and

Art Unit: 2645

a plurality of virtual mailboxes wherein the message is prioritized within such virtual mailboxes based on the priority code in at least two of the priority of mailboxes, (col. 8, lines 9-18)

As per claim 113:

Scannell teaches a computer-readable medium of instructions and data, comprising:

a received message, (abstract; col. 3, lines 37-39);

a personalized identifier corresponding to the received message (block 26 (sender) of message 25; fig. 2), wherein the personalized identifier does not require coordination between a user of the medium and an originator of the received message, (col. 7, lines 38-49);

computer instructions for receiving the message and the personalized identifier, (col. 3, lines 39-49);

a database (Rules store 12; figs. 1 and 2) containing known personalized identifiers, each personalized identifier associated with a code of a plurality of codes, (col. 6, lines 18-22);

computer instructions for correlating the received personalized identifier with a known personalized identifier, (col. 7, lines 38-45); and

computer instructions for prioritizing the message according to the priority code associated with the correlated known personalized identifier, (col. 6, lines 65-68; abstract).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

8. Claims 100, 109 and 115 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scannell in view of Larson et al. US Patent 6,408,068, (hereinafter Larson).

Art Unit: 2645

As per claims 100,109 and 115:

Scannell, as applied to above, does not specifically teach wherein the prioritization includes an element of a response device for providing a personalized response to the originator.

Larson teaches of a system which sends personalized responses to the caller depending on their caller identification, (col. 13, lines 39-55). Larson teaches that a user will use custom messages so that specific types of callers such as callers with blocked caller ID or specific people such as relatives can receive a customized message. Blocked caller ID users will receive a general custom message whereas relatives can receive a more personalized message.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Scannell by having the system provide a personalized response to the sender based on the sender identification as taught by Larson so that the sender, if they are important to the message receiver, can receive a personalized message or if the identification can determine that the sender is not important then the system can play a general message.

9. Claims 101,104,110 and 116 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scannell in view of Rochkind EP 0825752 A2.

As per claims 101,110 and 116:

While Scannell teaches of the information message being an e-mail message, Scannell does not specifically teach of the information message being a voice mail message.

Rochkind teaches that it was well known in the art to have a system which prioritizes and sorts e-mail messages, voice mail messages and multimedia messages, (page 2, lines 57-page 3, line 10; abstract). The system prioritizes incoming voice mail messages based on personalized

Art Unit: 2645

rules set by the user such as using an address extension. The sender of a message will indicate an extension which will be used by the receiver's system to determine what priority the message should receive, (page 5, table 2). The message is then stored in the mailbox according to the priority code.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Scannell by prioritizing voice mail messages as taught by Rochkind so that a user can prioritize all of their incoming voice, email and multimedia messages.

As per claim 104:

While Scannell teaches wherein the elements of the method are performed by a computer-automated system, Scannell does not specifically teach of wherein the elements are performed by an automated system selected from the group consisting of: a computer, a voice-type message storage device or a facsimile machine.

Rochkind teaches that it was well known in the art to have the method being performed by an automated system selected from the group consisting of: a computer, a voice-type message storage device, a facsimile machine, a combination of any two of the foregoing, and a combination of the first three of the foregoing, (page 2, lines 57-page 3, line 10; abstract).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the method of Scannell by using a voice-type message storage device or a facsimile machine as taught by Rochkind so that a user can prioritize all of their incoming voice, email and multimedia messages and can determine what messages are important without having to read or listen to all of the messages..

Art Unit: 2645

10. Claims 102,111 and 117 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scannell in view of Rochkind and further in view of Epstein et al. US Patent 6,327,343.

As per claims 102,111 and 117:

While Scannell and Rochkind teach wherein the personalized identifier is derived from the identification of the sender, Scannell and Rochkind do not specifically teach of wherein the personalized identifier is derived from a voiceprint of an audio element associated with the voice mail message or is a biometric signature associated with the originator and the information message.

Epstein teaches that it was well known in the art to use voiceprint/voice recognition to derive a personalized identifier from the received message and to prioritize the message based upon the derived information, (col. 5, lines 8-27,52-65;col. 9, lines 57-67). Epstein also teaches of associating a biometric signature (voiceprint) with the originator, (col. 5, lines 8-27; fig. 3B-step 210; col. 9, lines 12-24).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Scannell by employing the use of biometrics which include at least using voiceprints for identifying the sender of the incoming message as taught by Epstein so that the sender can still be identified if the caller ID was not received by the system.

11. Claim 103 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scannell in view of Rochkind and further in view of Larson.

As per claim 103:

Art Unit: 2645

Scannell and Rochkind, as applied to above, do not specifically teach wherein the prioritization includes an element of providing a personalized response to the originator based on the personalized identifier and the priority code.

Larson teaches of a system which sends personalized responses to the caller depending on their caller identification,' (col. 13, lines 39-55). Larson teaches that a user will use custom messages so that specific types of callers such as callers with blocked caller ID or specific people such as relatives can receive a customized message. Blocked caller ID users will receive a general custom message whereas relatives can receive a more personalized message.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Scannell by having the system provide a personalized response to the sender based on the sender identification as taught by Larson so that the sender, if they are important to the message receiver, can receive a personalized message or if the identification can determine that the sender is not important then the system can play a different message.

12. Claims 105,112 and 118 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scannell in view of Epstein et al. US Patent 6,327,343.

As per claims 105,112 and 118:

While Scannell teaches wherein the personalized identifier is derived from the identification of the sender, Scannell does not specifically teach of wherein the personalized identifier is derived from a voiceprint of an audio element associated with the voice mail message or is a biometric signature associated with the originator and the information message.

Art Unit: 2645

Epstein teaches that it was well known in the art to use voiceprint/voice recognition to derive a personalized identifier from the received message and to prioritize the message based upon the derived information, (col. 5, lines 8-27,52-65;col. 9, lines 57-67). Epstein also teaches of associated a biometric signature with the originator, (col. 5, lines 8-27; fig. 3B-step 210; col. 9, lines 12-24).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Scannell by employing the use of biometrics which include at least using voiceprints for identifying the sender of the incoming message as taught by Epstein so that the sender can still be identified if the caller ID was not received by the system.

Response to Arguments

13. Applicant's arguments filed 13 January 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicants noted that the current application is a CIP of US Patent 6,351,764 in which Scannell was cited and traversed and that their arguments reiterate the arguments that were successfully employed to traverse Scannell in the parent application.

The Examiner notes patentability is determined on the record as a whole on a case-by-case basis. Whether similar claims in other applications or prior art references may have been treated differently is neither controlling nor dispositive on how they are to be treated in any other application.

Applicant contends that with respect to independent claims 98,106 and 113, the current application is directed at a system that prioritizes messages after filing the message into multiple mailboxes. The Examiner respectfully disagrees.

Art Unit: 2645

As per claims 106 and 113, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., prioritizes messages after filing the message into multiple mailboxes) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993). Claims 106 and 113 are directed to personalized identifier corresponding to a message and associating personalized identifiers with a code and prioritizing based on the code.

As per claim 98, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., prioritizes messages after filing the message into multiple mailboxes) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims.

Claim 98 claims *inter alia* “depositing the message into at least two of a plurality of virtual mailboxes wherein the message is prioritized within such virtual mailboxes based on the code.”

In interpreting this limitation the Examiner believes that two outcomes must occur. First a message must be deposited into at least two virtual mailboxes and second the message in the mailbox must be prioritized based on a code. The Examiner believes that as long as the message in the virtual mailbox is deposited and is prioritized according to a code then, anticipation has occurred. The Examiner would like to point out that there is no specific limitation stating that the message cannot be prioritized before being deposited nor there is any limitation reading that the processing of prioritizing the message occurs only after the message has been deposited.

Art Unit: 2645

Given the prior art Scannell, the Examiner believes that since the messages are deposited and are prioritized in the mailboxes of Scannell, then the claims read on the prior art.

The Examiner would like to also explain in detail how Scannell reads on depositing the message into at least two of a plurality of virtual mailboxes wherein the message is prioritized within such virtual mailboxes based on the code. As shown in col. 8, lines 5-19, rules are matched based on the fields of the received message so that a priority can be assigned to the message. Scannell then states that the message along with the priority code is deposited into a mailbox and any other mailbox. The Examiner presents this scenario utilizing the method of Scannell; first, if a first message has a low priority code it is deposited into the mailbox along with its code. If a second message also has a low priority code then it is also deposited along with its code. If, a third message arrives which has a high priority then that message when deposited will be put on top of the list since higher priority messages must be heard first. Hence, based on the message priority code, the messages are prioritized within the mailbox after being deposited.

Applicants contend that Scannell nowhere discloses sorting and depositing the e-mail messages into a plurality of virtual mailboxes wherein the e-mail message is prioritized within such virtual mailboxes based upon the assigned code. Applicant states that Scannell teaches the use of one main "in tray" and that Scannell does not teach the prioritization of messages in each mailbox. The Examiner respectfully disagrees.

As stated above in the rejection and in col. 2, lines 21-27, Scannell provides at least a method and system which perform an automatic sorting and prioritizing of the messages in the in-tray (1st virtual mailbox), so that, for example, the user can deal with those messages of the

Art Unit: 2645

highest priority first, selectively in their entirety, regardless of the chronological order in which the messages arrived at the user's location. Therefore, Scannell teaches the prioritization of messages in at least a first virtual mailbox wherein messages are automatically sorted and prioritized within such virtual mailbox.

Scannell also teaches in col. 8, lines 9-19, when the message has been matched against all rules of the rule set, the actions stored in the actions storage unit 54 are matched against each other, to eliminate duplications of file-tos and forward-tos and to select the highest of whatever priorities have been assigned to the message. The actions are then carried out; the message is filed in the in-tray with the appropriate priority appended to it and in any further appropriate folders (2nd virtual mailbox) and forwarded to the appropriate addressees (if any).

Therefore, Scannell at least teaches that messages are sorted and prioritized in both the in-tray mailbox and at least one other mailbox.

Conclusion

14. Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

or faxed to:

(703) 872-9306, (for formal communications intended for entry)

Or:

(703) 872-9306, (for informal or draft communications, please label
"PROPOSED" or "DRAFT")

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to:

220 20th Street S.
Crystal Plaza two, Lobby, Room 1B03

Art Unit: 2645

Arlington, VA 22202

15. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ovidio Escalante whose telephone number is 703-308-6262 (571-272-7537 After March 22, 2005). The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th from 6:30 to 4:00. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Fan S Tsang can be reached on 703-305-4895 (571-272-7547 After March 22, 2005). The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

OVIDIO ESCALANTE
PATENT EXAMINER

Ovidio Escalante

Ovidio Escalante
Examiner
Group 2645
February 28, 2005

O.E./oe